

JOHN BROWNE, *Gentleman,*
OF PLYMOUTH

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JOHN BROWNE, *Gentleman*,
OF PLYMOUTH

(and one branch of descendants to the 12th generation)

ASSISTANT, COMMISSIONER, MAGISTRATE,

PIONEER IN NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL LIFE.

*He commanded the confidence and
esteem of the Whites and Indians alike.*

By GEORGE TILDEN BROWN,

JUSTICE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF RHODE ISLAND.

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To the author's mother, whose maiden name was

ROXELLANA POTTER,

*this volume is dedicated in fond remembrance,
and keen appreciation of maternal devotion,
that cannot be excelled.*

Foreword

In the preparation of this abridged genealogical sketch it has not been the purpose to recount any considerable portion of the events of the active and useful life of John Browne, Gentleman, of Plymouth, in Colonial affairs, nor to follow the several branches of his descendants. To do either would require more time than the author has at his disposal. The aim has been to present an exhaustive and accurate account of that branch in which the author traces his descent. It is hoped that a fair degree of success has been attained.

Some important events in the career of John Browne which tend to indicate his activity and usefulness in public affairs, incidents which reflect his traits of character, the esteem and confidence in which he was held by his contemporaries are mentioned, and incidentally some of the lateral descendants.

Reference to several conveyances is made for the purpose of establishing relationship of the persons mentioned with the line of descent under consideration. Such references, when not otherwise indicated, are to the record of Bristol County at Taunton.

Starting with John Browne, as the First Generation, a Roman numeral in brackets placed after a name indicates that the author traces his descent through such person in the generation corresponding. Other numerals in parenthesis in the text corresponding to numerals in the appended list of references, indicate the authority on which reliance is placed for the incident or fact there recorded.

If the persons who connect with this line of descent from John Browne derive satisfaction from such information of their ancestors as is compiled in this volume the author will feel compensated for the time and labor bestowed in its preparation.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.

November 13, 1919.

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*Legible reproduction of Letter from
John Browne to John Winthrop (1)*

Cohannett, the 3th of November 1640.

Worthy Sr.—Your letter to James Cole I have delivered, but have noe hope of getting any money of him: he saith he did owe you 62 li, but three munthes since Wm. Paddy gave him order to pay 30 li of it to Daniell Cole of Duxbury, pt whereof he hath already payed. For the 32 li he saith he hath hope to get you to spare him yet a year longer. He saith he hath payed for goods had of Luxford, by Mr. Paddyes appointment, near 100 li, soe that if Mr. Paddy should seeme to you that hee would give mee satisfaction, he is worthy blame for he never spake word to mee, tending to such an end, worth receiving an answer from mee. I thought fit to certify hereof, having soe fit an opportunity as this bearer, by whome I desyre to heare from you, if you^r occasions will permit. Soe resting you^r loving friend. John Browne.

8 of 10 pages

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JOHN BROWNE'S



ARMORIAL SEAL

(As it appears on a deed made by
his son James Browne in 1668)

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JOHN BROWNE, *Gentleman* [1] of PLYMOUTH

There were several Johns Browne in and about Plymouth contemporaneous, or nearly so, with the early arrival of John Browne, Gentleman, who is here under consideration. Among them was John Browne who came in the ship *Lion* with Captain Mason in 1632. He settled at Watertown. His first wife was Dorothy and his second Mary. He died in 1636 aged 36 (2) (3); also John Browne, the Duxbury weaver, brother of Peter Browne, a Mayflower passenger; and John Browne, lawyer, brother of Samuel Browne, both of whom came in March, 1628, and on October 29th of the following year were sent back. Neither returned to this country (4) (5) (6) (7); there was also a John Brown who married Phebe Harding March 26, 1634 (8).

Neither of these is the John Browne, Gentleman, here under consideration. Care should be taken not to confound them.

Nothing definite is known of the ancestors, and little of the early life of John Browne, Gentleman, of Plymouth. The date and place of his birth are unknown. He is believed to be of English descent, and to have been born about 1583.

The names of Mr. John Browne, and his two sons, John [II] and James, are on the list of males in Taunton in 1643 between the ages of sixteen and sixty, subject to military duty (9); thus it appears that the eldest of the three could not have been born before 1583, nor the youngest after 1627.

In his younger years John Browne traveled extensively into the low countries, and while so traveling became, says Morton, "acquainted with, and took good liking to the reverend pastor of the Church at Leyden, also to sundry of the brethren of that church, which ancient amity induced him upon his coming over to New England to seat himself in the jurisdiction of New Plimouth" (10) (11) (12) (13).

The date of his arrival in America is not known, but it must have been before September 3, 1634, because at a General Court holden at Plymouth on that date he was made a freeman of the Colony (14). That the person made freeman as above is the John Browne under consideration is sufficiently established by the following: "John Browne was a freeman of Massachusetts in 1634, and chosen an Assistant" (15) (16). In the years 1633 and 1634 the name of John Browne appears in the list of persons rated for assessment of tax (17).

It is probable, though not definitely established, that the John Browne so rated in the years 1633 and 1634 is the person of that name here considered.

The John Browne under consideration was an English shipbuilder, and came to this country when about fifty years old with his wife Dorothy, daughter Mary, and at least two sons, John and James, bringing a fair property with him (4) (12).

It seems to be pretty well established from the foregoing, that he was born about the year 1583 and arrived in Plymouth in 1633 or possibly shortly before.

His wife, Dorothy, as will be shown further along, was born in 1583. That he was a man of high rank in England appears from the titles of distinction he received, and by which he was recognized in New England, to wit, Mr, Gent, or Gentleman—the highest title conferred on any of the colonial Pilgrims (12) (18). Among the degrees of honor existing in England, which were noble, in the time of John Browne, was included that of “Gentleman” (19).

From the beginning he took high rank among the Pilgrims. He was first chosen Assistant, January 5, 1635 (20).

Some confusion will be avoided if it is constantly borne in mind that the new year at that time began March 25, and that this continued to be the case until 1752.

After the first General Court holden October 19, 1631, none had voice in the election of officers

but freemen, none were admitted freemen but such as were first admitted members of some church, and out of the more eminent sort of such the magistrates were chosen (21). The time when John Browne became a member of the Church is not known, but it must have been before he was made a freeman in 1634. From the time he was first chosen to the last, he held the office of Assistant continuously, except in the years 1637 and 1646. In these years he was not chosen (22). He was last chosen to the office of Assistant in 1655 (23). He held the office longer than any other person. The office of Assistant was second to that of Governor, corresponding in our day somewhat to that of Lieutenant Governor, and involved also judicial duties, as the General Court of Assistants (18).

John Browne about 1638 removed from Plymouth to Cohannet. Cohannet was incorporated by the name of Taunton March 3, 1639 (24). From Taunton he removed to Rehoboth, where he became a great proprietor of Wannamoisett included in the ancient Swansea (16). At a session of the Grand Inquest holden March 2, 1640, a presentment was returned against George Bowers "for a defamation against Mr. John Browne, Assistant" (25). In 1640 the bounds of Taunton were ranged and fixed by Myles Standish and John Browne (26).

John Browne and Myles Standish with others were appointed June 1, 1641, to set

the bounds of Barnstable and Yarmouth (27). In 1642 intelligence of a general conspiracy intended by the natives to cut off all the English in the land reached the colonists, whereupon they deemed it necessary to make a "defensive and offensive war against them (the natives) as if they were presently to be sent forth." To this end on the twenty-seventh day of September of that year at a General Court a Council of War was raised. Mr. John Browne was appointed a member of this Council. Again June 2, 1646, he was chosen a member of the Council of War. The General Court at a session holden April 6, 1653, decided it was advisable to raise a Council of War, "In regard of the many appearances of danger towards the country by enemies and the great necessity of counsel and advice in that respect." Mr. John Browne was chosen a member of this Council (28) (29) (30).

In the year 1643 the Colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut and New Haven united into a confederacy for their own mutual safety and welfare against the Dutch and Indians, and called themselves the United Colonies of New England. Each colony was authorized to send two Commissioners to meet annually in September, first at Boston, then at Hartford and Plymouth (31).

Mr. John Browne was one of the first Commissioners chosen. He was chosen for

Plymouth and held the office from his first appointment in 1644 for twelve years (32).

In 1645 the government of New Plymouth "sent Mr. John Brown, one of the magistrates, to Aquiday (Aquidnick, Rhode Island) to forbid Mr. Williams from exercising any authority there, and laying claim to the island" (33).

Mr. John Browne was appointed, June 4, 1646, a member of a commission to prepare a law for redress of present abuses and for preventing of future (34). Mr. Browne and Stephen Paine, July 12, 1649, "were chosen to make diligent search to find the most convenient way between Rehoboth and Dedham" and "It was agreed that Peter Hunt should accompany Mr. Browne to Plymouth to make agreement about the Indian Complaints" (35).

At the General Court holden June 5, 1651, the following entry was made on the record, "whereas a petition was formerly preferred unto this Court by Mr. Hanbery against Mr. Browne wherein the said Mr. Browne was much wronged it is ordered that if the said petition can be found on any of the files it shall be delivered to him."

The following entry appears on the record immediately after:

"It was afterwards found, delivered to him and burned" (36).

He was deputed, March 1, 1652, to inquire into the complaint of the neighboring Indians of Rehoboth, and, "Mr. John Browne is also deputed to make inquiry about the man that seleth strong waters at Providence" (30).

At the General Court holden at Plymouth June 4, 1652, Mr. John Browne complained against Mr. Samuel Newman in an action of defamation.

The Jury awarded Mr. Browne a verdict in the sum of £100 damages and charges of court.

Mr. Browne immediately remitted all of the verdict except the costs of court.

Mr. Goodwin says of the above incident: "The independent ways of the old shipwright called down some high-handed censure from his stern and sturdy pastor Newman. Browne sued the minister for slander, and the General Court gave him a verdict for 100 pounds damages and 23s costs.

Browne at once arose in court, and like Holmes, remitted the 100 pounds; vindication was all he wanted" (4).

He opposed the adoption of rigorous measures against the Quakers, and entertained scruples as to the expediency of coercing the people to support the ministry, although he was willing to contribute his proportion (37).

John Browne is said to have entertained tolerant views in religious matters, though

Roger Williams, in a letter written from Narragansett, February 24, 1649, to John Winthrop, Jr., says of him, "Mr. Browne hath often professed liberty of conscience, but now the way of new baptism spreads at Seekonk as well as at Providence and the Island, I have been so bold as to tell him that he persecutes his son and the people, and on the other side Mr. Newman also" (38).

In 1655 John Browne was deputed to take the proof of Wills at Taunton. He is said to have been the first Judge of Probate of Taunton (18). He was often employed in settling questions between the Whites and the Indians, who had great confidence in him (4).

Only a few isolated instances in the very active and useful life of John Browne in colonial affairs are above recorded.

There is much evidence in the colonial records of his time of his activity in both public and private affairs.

Some interesting information in this regard may be had by perusal of a little book in the Rhode Island Historical Society of Providence, entitled "John Browne, Gentleman, of England and Plymouth Colony,"; also by reference to 36 New England Historical and Genealogical Register 368.

Mr. Thomas W. Bicknell affords some very interesting information of John Browne.

He credits Mr. Browne with the establishment of a board of trade; with being the founder and purchaser of Stonington, Conn.; and with the establishment of a government at Kennebeck, Me.

Mr. Bicknell further says: "of Henry Vane, the father of Sir Harry Vane, in 1656, Mr. John Browne of Swains was sent to take charge of the large estates of the son, including Raby Castle, in Durham, of which Leland says, 'It is the largest Castel for loggings in all the North Country.' Mr. Browne obeyed the call of his English Patriot-friend, and from 1656 to 1660, made his home at Raby Castle or at Belleau (22), another castle in Lincolnshire. His work was the relief of Sir Harry from financial bankruptcy, acting as he did, as Stewart of Vane's estate until the return of Charles II to the throne" (18).

Mr. Bicknell, in another work, says: "The career of Mr. Brown was of great moment to Plymouth Colony." "He was a grand pioneer in the settlement of the towns west of Plymouth." "He was a wise and faithful magistrate, liberal in religious views, objecting to the law that compelled taxation of the people to support the Gospel" (39).

Morton referring to John Browne, says: Upon coming to Plymouth, "he was chosen a magistrate, in which place he served God

and the Country several years, he was accomplished with abilities to both civil and religious concernment" (10).

Goodwin says of John Browne: "In all generations the posterity of the great pioneer has done credit to its ancestry" (4).

He died at Swansea April 10, 1662 (40) (41). Baylies says: "He was a man of great piety, highly esteemed in the colony, and being so near the Indians, by whom he was greatly regarded, his death was a serious loss" (40). His wife Dorothy survived him.

The following entry appears upon the record, "Mistres Dorrithy Browne, the wife of Mr. John Browne sen^r. deceased Jan. 27, being in the 90th year of her age or thereabouts, and was buried on the 29th of January, 1673."

From this record we learn she was born in 1583.

Samuel Gorton, in his defence to the charges against him, related in Morton's Memorial, in a communication dated, Warwick, June 30, 1669, referring to a certain book, says: "I saw it in London, but read little of it; and when I came over into these parts, my ancient acquaintance and friend, Mr. John Browne, discoursing with me about those affairs in England, told me he had read such a book, printed or put forth by Mr.

Winslow; I told him I had seen it but read very little of it. Mr. Browne you know was a man approved of among you, an Assistant in your government, a Commissioner for the United Colonies etc. who thus spoke unto me in our discourse (I will not pervert nor alter a word of the will or words of the dead) I say, he affirmed unto me 'That he would maintain that there were 40 lies printed in that book' " (43).

On one occasion his son James, bearing a letter filled with friendly professions dispatched by the government to Philip, arrived as a war dance was closing. The young men were anxious to kill James, but Philip prevented them, saying his father had charged him to show kindness to Mr. Browne (44) (45).

James Walker in a letter to Governor Prince, September 1, 1671, speaking of this incident says: "Cousin James went down to Mount Hope, and the dance being broken up Philip and the most of his chief men were much in drink so that Philip could not then give any answer. Only there passed some words betwixt Philip and cousin James, and Philip struck off cousin James Browne's hat" (46).

In John Browne's will dated April 7, 1662, which is published at length together with the inventory of his effects (47), of which he makes his wife, and son, James Browne, executors, he mentions his children Mary and

James; and his grandchildren, John, Joseph, Nathaniel, Lydia and Hannah, all children of his son John Browne, Jr.; and also his granddaughter, Martha Saffin, wife of John Saffin.

To his daughter Mary, wife of Thomas Willett, he gives "the sum of twelve pence to bee payed at the end of every year during her life for a memorial unto her: and it shall bee in full of all fillial portion which shee or any in her behalf shall claim." This will was admitted to probate at Plymouth, October 3, 1662.

The provision for his daughter Mary, above quoted, was so strange that the court was led to order the following indorsement to be made on the will:

"Least any thing mentioned in this will in reference to Mistris Mary Willett the wife of Capt. Thomas Willett might bee by any mis construed to the prejudice of the said Mistris Willett, we think it meet to declare that out of the long experience of her dutiful and tender respect to her said father from time to time expressed there hath never appeared to us the least ground of any such thinge to this present."

John Browne was buried in Little Neck Cemetery at Barrington, R. I., now East Providence.

In 1913 the Rhode Island Citizens Historical Association of Providence addressed a Memorial to The General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, calling attention to some of the activities of Mr. John Browne in colonial affairs and the long and valued public services he had rendered in Plymouth Colony, the lack even of a simple marker at his grave, suggesting the desirability of the erection of a suitable monument at his grave to commemorate his distinguished services, and asking that a commission of three persons be named to consider and advise as to the erection of such a monument. Thereafter by authority of resolution approved May 7, 1914, Chapter 62, Resolves of 1914, (House No. 801), a commission, On The John Browne Memorial was appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts which made a report in which some of the conspicuous events of his Colonial activities were mentioned and recommending as follows:

RECOMMENDATIONS

We respectfully recommend that a monument in the form of an old style tomb be erected at or near the grave of John Browne, composed of brick, stone or cement, of approximate dimensions above the ground as follows: 6 feet, 2 inches long; 3 feet, 2 inches high; 2 feet, 6½ inches wide; with a bronze tablet 2 feet, 5 inches wide; 2 feet,

5 inches high; inserted 3½ inches deep in the front face thereof; and suitably and appropriately inscribed.

Also that a bronze tablet, suitably mounted and bearing the same inscription, be placed in the Goff Memorial Hall at Rehoboth Village, Mass., the form and style of said monument and tablets to be subject to the approval of the Massachusetts Art Commission.

That a commission be appointed by His Excellency the Governor, composed of the three members of the commission created under the resolve of the General Court, Chapter 62 of the year 1914, and two others, to erect said monument and provide said tablets.

That there be allowed and paid out of the treasury of the Commonwealth to the commission thus authorized to erect at Little Neck Cemetery at Barrington, R. I., and in the Goff Memorial Hall at Rehoboth, Mass., memorials in honor of John Browne, a sum not exceeding \$1000 toward defraying the cost and expenses of said memorials.

FREDERIC W. BLISS,
GEO. N. GOFF,
WALTER GILMAN PAGE,

Commission of John Browne Memorial.

It may be added that, up to the present time, nothing has been done in the matter in

consequence probably of the breaking out of the war.

John Browne and Dorothy his wife, whose maiden name is not known, had the following children, all born before coming to this country, viz.:

1. MARY, 2. JOHN [II], AND 3. JAMES.

It has been suggested that there may have been another son, William, but the record affords no sufficient evidence to warrant such conclusion (4) (45).

Mary Browne, daughter of Mr. John Browne, was born in 1614, and was probably oldest of the children. She married July 6, 1636, Thomas Willett (48), and died January 8, 1669.

She was buried "by her father Mr. John Browne, and other relations upon a little hill in Swansey" in Little Neck Cemetery, Riverside. Her husband survived her, married a second time, died in August 1674, and was buried by her side.

At the graves of Thomas Willett and Mary Willett are stones inscribed as follows:

1674

Here lyeth ye body of ye
Wor. Thomas Willett,
esqr., who died Aug. 4,
in ye 64th year of his
anno.

Footstone

Who was the first May.
of New York and twice
did sustain ye place.

1669

Here lyeth ye body of ye
virtuous Mary Willett,
wife of Thomas Willett,
esqr., who died, January
ye 8th, about ye 55th
year of her anno.

Footstone

daughter to Worf. John
Browne Esq. deceased.

(49) (50)

The date of Mary Willett's death is clearly inscribed on the stone as 1669, but the figure in place of tens indicating her age at the time of death is not so clear. Some one has attempted to make the figure legible by cutting it over, and in so doing has left a figure which resembles the figure 8. If that is correct she must have been in her 85th year

at the time of her death, as the last figure is clearly a 5. This would bring her birth in 1584, when her mother was only one year old. A close inspection of the figure leads me to the belief that it was originally a 5, and that she was in her 55th year at the time of her death.

Thomas Willett was a noted and highly respected man. He held the office of Assistant for several years (51). A historian says:

“Capt. Thomas Willett, a magistrate and a man of great ability and enterprise having large possessions at Narragansett, nearby, came and settled here” in Swansea (52).

Thomas Willett and his wife Mary, had the following children, all born in Plymouth: 1. Mary, November 10, 1637; 2. Martha, August 6, 1639; 3. John, August 1, 1641; 4. Sarah, May 4, 1643; 5. Rebekah, December 2, 1644; 6. Thomas, October 1, 1645; 7. Esther, July 10, 1648; 8. James, November 22, 1649; 9. Hezekiah, November 2, 1651; 10. David, November 1, 1654; 11. Andrew, October 5, 1656; 12. Samuel, the youngest, October 24, 1658 (41) (53).

Sarah Willett married Rev. John Eliot, the apostle to the Indians (54).

Hezekiah Willett married, January 7, 1675, Andia Brown, his cousin (42). He was a public favorite and a young man of great promise. During Philip's War, while there

was no thought of danger, on the first day of July, 1676, having ventured a short distance beyond his door in Swansea, he was shot dead with three balls by some prowling Indians, his head cut off, and carried away, and his body left on the ground.

This outrage exasperated the whole colony, more especially in view of the uniform kindness of the Willett family to the Indians, and caused the English to take vigorous action against the Indians. In all offers of pardon and amnesty these assassins were excepted; and when Crossman, their leader, was taken he was hanged. Even the hostile Wamoaags lamented young Willett's death, and when the head was recovered, it was found they had tenderly combed the hair and decorated it with beads (49) (55).

Martha Willett married December 2, 1658, John Saffin (53) (56) a lawyer of Bristol (57). She bore him nine children. In his Diary is the following entry:

"1678. On Wednesday about midnight the 1st day of December, 1678, my thrice dearly beloved consort departed this life after eleven days sickness of that dread disease of ye smallpox, all which hath tended to my almost insupportable grief after the enjoyment of her, my sweet Martha, twenty years."

John Saffin seems to have held his mother-in-law in high esteem, as indicated by the following poetic effusion entered in his Diary:

“Epitaph on Mrs. Marie Willett”

“Here lies the peerless Parragon of Fame,
Mary, the Virtuous Willett is her name,
Whose true deserts to show, requires a straine,
Proceeding from a Helliconian Braine.
Both grace and beauty in her face did shine,
Enthroned in magesty, almost divine;
Which mixt with mildness did the more advance
The lovely splendor of her countenance.
Had she lived in the days of yore, when such
Who ne’r exceld in virture, half so much,
She would have been above them set on high,
And been adored as A Deitie;
Yea Venus, Pallas and the Graces,
Compared with her should all have lost their
places;
And all these Temples for them richly stated,
Should to her honor, have been dedicated.
But now she’s Paradised Triumphantly
Where she shall lie unto eternity.”

After the death of his wife, Martha, John Saffin married twice. He died at Bristol, July 29, 1710 (58).

Major James Browne, son of John Browne, Sr., was born in 1623. In his will executed October 25, 1694, he mentions his age as about seventy-one. He was the youngest of John Browne's children. He married Lydia, daughter of John and Elizabeth (Tilley) Howland, who were Mayflower passengers, and died at Swansea, October 29, 1710, aged 87. He makes his wife Lydia executrix of his will (59). Dr. King says of him, "James Browne came of especially good stock, as is well known" (60). In 1665 he was elected Assistant, and with the exception of the year 1667, held the office continuously until 1684. Like his father, he opposed the adoption of rigorous measures against the Quakers (37) (61). He was regarded as his father's successor; that he was major see (45).

In a deed made July 12, 1682, by James Browne (62), he refers to his brother John as, "my dearly beloved elder brother, Mr. John Brown," and further, after stating that John Browne Jr. died March 31, 1662, says "my said brother together with myself did to that time help and assist our said father in the management and support of his estate without any other consideration than that he was our natural father, and we his undoubted heirs."

James Browne and his wife Lydia had the following children, all born at Rehoboth:

1. James (Jr.);
2. Jabez, and
3. Dorothy.

James Browne, Jr., was born May 4, 1655, married Margaret Dennison, died at Barrington.

In his will, made June 28, 1717, and probated May 4, 1719, he mentions his wife Margaret, his eldest son James, other sons, William, Benjamin and Isaac; his daughters, Mary Angell, Alice Hill, Margaret Carpenter, Dorothy and Mercy Brown (63).

Margaret Brown, widow of James Brown, Jr., in her will made February 6, 1733, and probated May 18, 1742, mentions their sons, James, William and Isaac, as deceased. These two wills are published at length.

Jabez Browne married 1. Jane, 2. Abiah.

In his will he mentions his son John, daughter Jane, wife of Nathaniel Bosworth, his son Oliver's daughter Rebecca, and Ann at age of eighteen, daughter Rebecca Peck's children, Jerusha, and Winchester at age of eighteen and son Hezekiah (63).

Dorothy Browne married November 12, 1690, Joseph Kent, Jr. Jabez Browne was a house carpenter. This appears by an instrument executed May 13, 1716, by Jabez Brown, "house carpenter," and his wife Jane, of Swansea (64). Jabez Brown and James Brown (Jr.), as heirs of James Brown's est. late of Swansea, deceased, and Samuel Brown and Daniel Brown as heirs of Capt. John Brown [III], late of Swansea, convey

land January 27, 1723, which they have as heirs of James Brown, Esq., and Capt. John Brown (65). Jabez Brown yeoman of Barrington conveys, December 6, 1730, to Benjamin Brown and Isaac Brown, one half tract belonging "to my father James Brown Esq., dec'd" (66). James Brown conveys property August 10, 1702, to his son Jabez Brown. His wife Lydia signs the deed (67). Jabez Brown and his wife Jane, August 4, 1715, execute an instrument (68). By deed made May 30, 1740, John Brown [IV] conveys land that Jabez Brown gave to his son Oliver Brown (69).

ENSIGN JOHN BROWN [II]

Ensign John Browne was the elder son of John Browne, Gentleman [I] and his wife Dorothy (70).

The date of his birth is not definitely known. It must have been before 1623, as his younger brother James was born that year, and after 1614, as Mary, his sister, who was undoubtedly the oldest of the children, was born that year.

He died the last day of March, 1662, ten days before his father's death (40) (41) (45).

He was twice married. This fact is established by a statement of his brother James Browne in which he refers to John's oldest child, "as my loving nephew, John Brown" [III] "eldest son of my brother John by his first wife" (62).

The name of the first wife is not known, nor the date of his marriage to her, nor the date of her death. For his second wife he married Lydia Buckland, daughter of William Buckland. The date of his second marriage is not definitely known. Land was granted to William Buckland by the town of Hingham in 1636. William Buckland was buried in Bingham September 1, 1679 (71) (72) (73).

In the little book previously mentioned, reference is made to a deed in which the following language appears in reference to

John Browne Jr., "John Jr. had 2 sons by his first wife of which John was the eldest."

John Browne Jr.'s second son was Joseph; he was born April 9, 1658. Therefore his marriage to his second wife, Lydia Buckland, must have occurred subsequent to April 9, 1658.

John Browne Jr., in his will, made last of March, 1662, and published at length (47) makes the following provision; "Whereas my father-in-law, William Buckland, standeth engaged unto me in the sum of three score pounds which was to be for the portion he was to give me in marriage with my wife and was to be payed me in the year 1660; this sum which is now in my father-in-law, his hands I do give unto my wife," etc.

It is highly probable that if the marriage portion was to be paid in 1660, the marriage was celebrated not long before that time.

It is certain that the eldest child John Browne [III] was by the first wife, and it is highly probable that the next three children were by the first wife. John Browne, Jr., was first appointed Ensign March 20, 1653, and was again appointed in 1654 (74). John Browne, Jr. had the following children, all born at Rehoboth:

1. John [III], born last Friday 27th of September 1650;
2. Lydia, born August 5, 1656;
3. Anna (or Hannah, or Andia), born

January 29, 1657; 4. Joseph born April 9, 1658; 5. Nathaniel, born June 9, 1661, Nathaniel the last was by Lydia Buckland, his second wife.

Bearing in mind that the new year began March 25, it will be seen that Lydia was seventeen months old when Anna Browne married William Fitch. Anna Browne married January 7, 1674, Hezekiah Willett, her cousin (42). Joseph Brown married November 10, 1680, Hannah Fitch (75). Nathaniel Browne married, first Sarah Jencks. She died in 1708, and, second Hannah Matthews. She died in Swansea, November 13, 1739 (41) (45) (76). In the little book previously mentioned, it is stated that Joseph Browne, second son of John Browne, Jr., removed to Attleboro in 1699, became prominent in town affairs, was captain of the Attleboro Military Company, was elected Representative to the General Court several years, was moderator and selectman several years and died May 5, 1731; his wife Hannah died October 14, 1739, and that both were buried in what is now known as Knowles Cemetery, and that a stone is there erected to the memory of both. In the old proprietor's records of the town of Attleboro, in an exchange of lands between Joseph Brown and William Carpenter, Jr., under date of March 13, 1698, Joseph in describing the boundary mentions, "Ten acres purchased of my brother Nathaniel Brown." This record is in the City Clerk's office of the

City of Attleboro. In a History of Attleboro, Capt. Joseph Brown is said to have been Representative in the years 1712, 1726, 1727, 1728. In a foot-note it is stated that Capt. Joseph Brown was "son of Mr. John Browne of Rehoboth," well known in the history of the old colony" (77). Some dates given in that foot-note are manifestly wrong. The foregoing seems to be sufficient to identify him as son of John Brown, Jr. Joseph Brown and his wife Hannah had ten children, among whom were Jabez, born December 30, 1683; John, born March 13, 1685; Joseph, born August 28, 1688.

John Brown 3, son of John Brown, Jr., of Swansea by deed dated May 16, 1692, "for the brotherly love and natural affection he hath and beareth to his brother Nathaniel Brown of the town of Rehoboth" makes conveyance of land (78). John Brown 3 of Swansea (his wife Ann also signs) by deed dated July 12, 1682, conveys to "my honored uncle James Brown of Swansea aforesaid, Gent," all such estate, etc., which I ever had in and to that one moyety or half of estate which was given "unto him by the last will and testament of my honored grandfather, Mr. John Brown, dated the seventh day of April, 1662" (79). James Brown, Esq. of Swansea by deed dated June 30, 1685, conveys land to "Joseph Brown his nephew of Rehoboth" (80).

CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN [III]

John Brown [III] was the eldest son of John Brown, Jr., by his first wife. He was born the last Friday 27th of September 1650, married November 8, 1672, at Saybrook, Conn., Ann Mason, and died November 24, 1709 (41). His father, John Brown, Jr., refers to him as his eldest son (81). Ann Mason, wife of John Brown 3, born at Saybrook, Conn., June, 1650, was the daughter of Major John and Ann (Peck) Mason. She survived her husband. Major John Mason was conqueror of the Pequots, and is referred to as "Pequot John." (41) (73) (82).

The children of John Brown 3, and his wife Ann (Mason) Brown, all born at Swansea, (42) were:

1. Ann, September 19, 1673; 2. John [IV], April 28, 1675; 3. Samuel, January 31, 1677; 4. Lydia and 4 Rachel, (twins), May 16, 1679; 6. Martha, November 20, 1681; 7. Daniel, October 29, 1683, died in infancy; 8. Ebenezer, June 15, 1685; 9. Daniel 2d, September 26, 1686; 10. Stephen, January 29, 1688; 11. Joseph, May 19, 1690; 12. Elizabeth, December 12, 1691; she died in the same year (73) (83).

Ebenezer Brown married February 25, 1714, Sarah, daughter of the second Samuel Hyde, and died in Lebanon in 1755. His wife died in Windham, March 1, 1797, aged ninety-nine years and two months (63) (84).

John Brown 3, was appointed Lieutenant of Military Co. at Swansea, July 4, 1673, and Captain of the Guard at Mt. Hope, October 4, 1675 (85).

John Brown [IV] of Swanzey conveyed to "his three brothers, namely, Samuel Brown of Rehoboth, Daniel Brown and Joseph Brown of Swanzey, all that tract of land where said brothers now dwell and where our honored father Capt. John Brown 3, late of Swanzey deceased in ye possession of lying and being as a place called Wannamoisett partly in said Swanzey but mostly in ye township of Rehoboth," by deed dated September 11, 1716 (86).

CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN [IV]

John Brown [IV] was born in Swansea, April 28, 1675, and died April 23, 1752, aged 77 (42).

He married first, July 2, 1696, Abigail Cole, daughter of James and Mary Cole.

They had the following children: 1. Mary, born November 21, 1697; 2. Ann, born April 1, 1700; 3. Elizabeth, born October 4, 1702; 4. John, born March 19, 1704; 5. James [V] born January 2, 1706; 6. Jeremiah, born June 26, 1710.

Mary married Daniel Gould. Ann married March 14, 1725, Walter Chaloner. The latter was sheriff of Newport County in 1769 (88). Elizabeth married September 3, 1732, John Hudson. She died June 3, 1756. John married first, November 5, 1724, Lydia Mason, and second, September 7, 1748 Bertha Stafford. He died March 18, 1754. James married Ruth Pierce. Jeremiah married January 10, 1731, Elizabeth Session. He died May 1, 1776.

Capt. John Brown [IV] married second, February 24, 1715, Mary Pierce Burgain (87).

Upon what is believed to be reliable information, John Brown had by the second marriage the following children:

1. Benjamin; 2. Rachel, born August 2, 1716; 3. David, born February 22, 1718;

4. Seth, born April 28, 1720; 5. Lydia, born September 5, 1725; 6. Martha, born July 21, 1729.

James Cole and Mary, his wife, of Swansea, by deed dated October 22, 1696, made conveyance to John Brown Jun^r [IV] of Swansea, wherein is the following recital, "whereas a marriage was solemnized on the second day of July last past between John Brown Jun^r of Swansea, and our dear and only and dutiful daughter Abigail Cole to our good liking and great satisfaction," etc. (89).

Capt. John Brown [IV] of Swansea by deed dated February 22, 1734, also by deed dated February 8, 1741, conveyed land to his "son James Brown" [V] (90).

He also conveyed to his "son Jeremiah Brown" of Swansea, land in Swansea by deed dated May 12, 1735 (91). John Brown 4, of Swanzey by deed dated August 29, 1724, signed also by Mary (his second wife), conveyed land to his "eldest son John Brown" of Swanzey (92). Capt. John Brown 4, conveyed to his "son John Brown" land by deed dated May 23, 1728 (93).

Capt. John Brown 3, father of Capt. John Brown 4, "was a man of positive nature, unflinching in the discharge of everything he deemed a duty. It is said of him that he was so enraged at his son John [IV], when he joined the Baptist Church that supposing the latter's residence to be partially on his

land, he was going to pull the part to which he laid claim away from the other, thus aiming to destroy the house, but a survey made to ascertain the fact showed no portion of the house touched his land."

The incident "tells the character of the men of that perilous pioneer period—athletic, strong-minded, and positive in character, they were well fitted to develop civilization from the unpromising and savage surroundings, and to contend ably with its foes. Among these settlers the Browns were leaders and their different generations were prominent in church and local matters" (11) (94).

JAMES BROWN [V]

James Brown second son of Capt. John Brown [IV] by his first wife Abigail (Cole) Brown, was born January 2, 1706, married Ruth Pierce, daughter of Ephraim and Mary (Low) Pierce of Glocester, R. I., and died in Swansea, May 4, 1777.

They had the following children all born in Swansea:

1. Abigail, December 30, 1729; 2. James, September 3, 1731; 3. Aaron [VI], April 6, 1734; 4. David, February 11, 1740.

Abigail Brown married Dec. 9, 1744, Hezekiah Chace. James Brown, married in 1753, Mary Anthony, born in Providence in 1737. Aaron Brown married April 17, 1755, Catherine Bell. David Brown, married March 25, 1759, Elizabeth Hill. He died April 18, 1822, aged 82.

Aaron Brown of Swanzey, second son of James Brown of Swanzey, by deed dated March 4, 1762, also by deed dated May 15, 1770, both of which are signed by Katherine Brown, his wife, made conveyances of land to "my honored father, James Brown of Swanzey" (95). James Brown of Swanzey by deed dated March 16, 1765, signed also by his wife Ruth, conveyed land in Swanzey to Seth Wood (96).

AARON BROWN [VI]

Aaron Brown was born April 6, 1734, married April 17, 1755, Catherine Bell. His will was allowed March 5, 1799. It is not known who Catherine Bell was. It is said she was English. There is a hazy tradition that Aaron Brown was a sea-faring man; met Miss Bell in an English port and married her; that her parents raising some objection, she came with her husband to Swansea, and spent her life there.

Aaron Brown and his wife Catherine, had the following children, all born in Swansea: 1. Elisha, born November 2, 1755; 2. Abigail, born December 9, 1757; 3. Obadiah [VII], born March 20, 1761; 4. Rebekah, born April 30, 1763; 5. William, born September 2, 1765; 6. A son born May 17, 1768, who died two days later.

Elisha Brown married March 26, 1788, Ann Kinnicutt, daughter of Daniel and Hannah (Kent) Kinnicutt, and died Sept. 24, 1846, aged 90 years and 10 months. Abigail Brown married May 21, 1778, John Brown, son of Jarvis and Ann (Kinnicutt) Brown. Obadiah Brown married Esther Wood. Rebekah Brown married April 15, 1789, Samuel Luther of Swansea.

OBADIAH BROWN [VII]

Obadiah Brown was born in Swansea, March 20, 1761, married August 28, 1783, Esther Wood, daughter of Seth and Roby (Rounds) Wood of Swansea.

So far as has been discovered they had only one child, namely, Seth W. Brown [VIII]. He was born in Swansea, July 19, 1787.

A diligent search of the records, inquiry of and correspondence with many persons, fail to afford information of what finally became of Obadiah Brown and his wife Esther.

No will, or record of administration upon his estate has been discovered. In the will of Aaron Brown, his father, which was admitted to probate March 5, 1799, Obadiah and his brother Elisha, are named as joint executors. Obadiah alone qualified, filing a bond in which he is described of Swansea. Obadiah Brown was made a freeman of the town of Sterling, Conn., April 10, 1791.

October 11, 1796, by deed in which he is described of Swansea, he conveyed land located in Swansea, to Samuel Luther, February 6, 1804, by deed in which he is described of Sterling, Conn., he conveyed other land located in Swansea, to the same Samuel Luther. His wife Esther signed both deeds. From 1805 to 1812, he engaged in numerous transactions

in Sterling, as shown by the records of that town. Among these transactions is a sale made August 1, 1811 to Seth W. Brown of Sterling of an interest in American Cotton Mfg. Co.; also a sale made May 23, 1812, to Walter Paine of Providence, R. I., of an interest in American Cotton Mfg. Co. of Sterling.

“Obadiah Brown of Hope in ye county of Lincoln, yeoman, and Esther Brown his wife in her right” quit claim by two deeds dated Nov. 21, 1815 “in right of ye sd Esther” in one of said deeds to John Wood etc., “one undivided ninth part of all ye estate etc., which Seth Wood late of Swansey yeoman died seized of etc., the sd one undivided ninth part of ye said estate fell to ye said Esther Brown in her right as one of ye children etc., of Seth Wood”; in the other of said deeds they quit claim “All title to ‘undivided ninth part of a ninth part fell to Miller Wood, son and heir to said Seth Wood’ ” (97).

No trace of Obadiah Brown or his wife Esther has been found subsequent to the two conveyances last above mentioned.

LIEUT. SETH W. BROWN [VIII]

Seth W. Brown, son of Obadiah Brown and his wife Esther, was born in Swansea July 19, 1787, died in Somerset Mass., June 20, 1877, and was buried in Gibbs Cemetery in Somerset. He married, first, in Sterling, Conn., March 19, 1807, Margaret Burlingame, daughter of Peter and Elizabeth (Montgomery) Burlingame; second, May 1, 1844, Bethany. She died January 18, 1863. There is no public record of the birth of Seth W. Brown in Swansea. His birth as above given is recorded in his old family Bible, now in possession of William Alden Brown, of Providence, his great grandson. The record of his death in Somerset affords the information that Seth W. Brown was born in Swansea, Mass., his father's name as Obadiah Brown, his mother's maiden name as Esther Wood, his death in Somerset, June 20, 1877, "age 89 years, 11 months, 1 day." He had no children by his second wife.

Margaret Burlingame, his first wife was born in Sterling, April 4, 1790, and died Jan. 2, 1842.

Seth W. Brown and Margaret (Burlingame) Brown had the following children:

1. Roxellana Brown, born in Sterling, October 16, 1807, married William McCann, and died January 2, 1895. Their children were:
1. Daniel A., 2. Mary E., 3. William, 4. Minnie.

2. Peter Tilden Brown [IX], born in Sterling March 30, 1810, died in West Greenwich, R. I., February 25, 1853.

3. Esther Brown, born April 5, 1813, married, first, May 12, 1833, William Reynolds, second, Barnum Pierce. She had no children by either husband. She died December 1, 1893.

4. Alden Montgomery Brown, born October 4, 1815, and died October 20, 1905. He married Eliza Pierce. She was born May 6, 1820, and died July 26, 1899. Their only child was Asahel Pierce Brown, born September 6, 1846, and died August 3, 1898. All three are buried in Gibbs Cemetery. Asahel Pierce Brown married October 2, 1872, Mary Adelaide Brown.

Their only child was William Alden Brown, born in Providence, March 15, 1877. He has never married.

5. Elizabeth Burlingame Brown, born May 15, 1818, married, first, Charles Burdick. They had only one child, namely Elmily C. Burdick, born May 9, 1840; second, November 17, 1842, James Freeman Foster. They had the following children: 1. Massena L., born December 29, 1843, died May 17, 1903. 2. Philena M., born September 8, 1845, died January 12, 1859. 3. Roxellana M., born July 5, 1848. 4. Justina L., born September 3, 1850, died September 3, 1869. 5. Margaret A., born August 12, 1852, died May 17, 1915.

6. Seth J., born January 9, 1855, died October 1, 1884. Elizabeth Burlingame (Brown) Foster died January 15, 1899.

6. Margaret Brown, born September 2, 1820, married September 15, 1842, Julius Corydon Smith. They had the following children, namely: 1. Lydia Eliza, born August 27, 1843. She married May 29, 1860, Augustus H. Beecher, and died March 11, 1866. 2. Esther Lodiski, born September 30, 1846, married January 15, 1865, Albert D. Lynch. 3. Seth Julius born October 13, 1852, and died March 13, 1853. 4. Nellie Frances, born January 22, 1855, married December 13, 1876, Clarence W. Finch. 5. Margaret Phidelia, born January 31, 1857, married October 15, 1881, Peter L. Burlingame. Margaret (Brown) Smith died January 7, 1888.

7. Seth Brown, born January 25, 1823, went to California and was lost sight of.

8. Hervey Sullens Brown, born June 26, 1825, died February 28, 1858. He never married.

9. Cordelia Jane Brown born June 22, 1830, died June 9, 1832.

10. John Rhinaldo Brown, born July 17, 1834, went to California, was last heard from in a letter written from San Francisco, May 22, 1894. It is believed he never married.

Seth W. Brown [VIII] was appointed Lieutenant of the 6th Company, 21st Reg. Militia, Conn., and duly commissioned May 9, 1816 by Gov. John Cotton Smith of that state.

PETER TILDEN BROWN [IX]

Peter Tilden Brown was born in Sterling, March 30, 1810. He married in West Greenwich, R. I., June 15, 1837, Roxellana Potter, daughter of Allen and Lydia (Spink) Potter, and died in West Greenwich, February 25, 1853.

They had the following children, all born in West Greenwich: 1. Charles, born August 10, 1838, died when three weeks old; 2. George Washington, born February 22, 1840, died when 3½ years old; 3. Angelina Margaret, born March 4, 1841, never married; 4. Ann Eliza, born September 4, 1842, died in June, 1866, never married; 5. Mary Elizabeth, born October 8, 1843; 6. Harriet Malissa, born July 7, 1846, died February 1, 1863, never married; 7. George Tilden [X] born June 29, 1848; 8. Delana Remington, born March 26, 1850.

Mary Elizabeth Brown married in West Greenwich, April 15, 1865, George W. Whitman. They had the following children: 1. Lewell Marion; 2. Henry Clay and 3. Annie Elizabeth. Delana Remington Brown married in Exeter, R. I., February 13, 1867, Jesse Carr. They had the following children: 1. Jesse Tilden and 2. Annie Eliza.

Peter Tilden Brown kept a grocery store and carried on farming near Congdon's Mills in West Greenwich. He was elected a member of the so-called Dorr Legislature from West Greenwich in 1842 (98). He favored the extension of the right of suffrage in Rhode Island as advocated by Mr. Dorr.

GEORGE TILDEN BROWN [X]

George Tilden Brown was born in West Greenwich, June 29, 1848. He married in Providence, August 29, 1876, Ida Rebekah Williams, daughter of Charles and Hannah W. (Wheeler) Williams.

They had two children, both born in Providence, namely: 1. Gertrude Tilden, born May 17, 1877, and 2. Bertha, born April 10, 1884.

Gertrude Tilden Brown married in Providence, January 1, 1913, Frank Fenner Mason of Pawtucket, R. I. They had two children, both born in Pawtucket, namely: 1. Tilden Brown Mason, born December 18, 1913, and 2. Gertrude Mason, born August 5, 1915.

Bertha Brown married in Providence, February 5, 1908, Henry James Fisk of Providence. They had the following children: 1. Rebekah, born in Providence November 13, 1908, 2. James Brown, born in Warwick, R. I. August 30, 1910. 3. George Tilden, born in Cranston, R. I., July 28, 1913.

Henry James Fisk removed with his family to Tacoma, Washington, in 1916, where he now resides. Bertha Brown entered Vassar College in 1902, and graduated from that institution in 1906. George Tilden Brown entered Brown University in 1869 and graduated in 1873; also graduated from Albany

Law School in 1875 and was admitted to the bar in Rhode Island in October of the same year. He practiced law in Providence until he was elected a Justice of the Superior Court, in May, 1905. He entered upon the duties of the office July 17, 1905.

He was a member of the Rhode Island House of Representatives from West Greenwich in 1877, and from Providence in the years 1887 and 1893, and was state senator from Providence in the years 1889 to 1891.

In politics he is a Democrat. Was a member of the Democratic State Central Committee for several years and chairman of the Democratic City Committee of Providence for several years. He was a delegate from Rhode Island to the Democratic National Convention holden at St. Louis in 1888.

SUPPLEMENT

EBENEZER PERKINS and ABIGAIL BATES were married at Coventry, R. I., March 22, 1742. Their daughter Martha was born November 10, 1746.

MARTHA PERKINS of Coventry married at Sterling, September 3, 1767, Capt. Asa Montgomery of Voluntown, Conn. Their daughter Elizabeth was born at Voluntown, April 4, 1778.

ELIZABETH MONTGOMERY of Voluntown married at Sterling, April 23, 1789, Peter Burlingame. Their daughter Margaret was born in Sterling, April 4, 1790.

MARGARET BURLINGAME of Sterling, married at Sterling, March 19, 1807, Seth W. Brown of Sterling.

For further particulars see Lieut. Seth W. Brown (VIII).

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